University Menaced By Long's Dictation

Canker of Politics Eats Deeply Into Every Department of L.S.U.

This is another of a series of articles on assessments, taxation and the costs of government in Louisiana. The author, from long experience in public affairs, is thoroughly familiar with the subject and his purpose is to tell in simple language that all may understand how the state and its agencies handle the huge volume of funds derived from a greater variety of taxes, licenses, etc., than any other state has.

The canker of politics, eating deeply into practically every department of the Louisiana state university, is responsible for some queer contradictions. It has produced some penny-pinchers and some free spenders; there is simplicity and ostentation, niggardliness and generosity in treatment of professors and students, progress and retrogression.

As has been abundantly established by the record, Senator Long is the directing force at the university, although officially he has absolutely no connection with it. The governor of Louisiana is ex-officio chairman of the board of supervisors of the institution, but United States senators are not a part of its organization. Of course in Louisiana public affairs Governor Allen is reckoned a cipher as large as a horse collar—the cipher before the 1 and not after it. But at least he has an official connection with the university, and Senator Long has not.

However, this little technicality of law (hiatus, Mr. Long would style it) is not permitted to interfere with any plans the senior senator may have in mind for the conduct of the university. And he has lots of them. There is a board, of course, and a faculty, and a student body and an alumni. But, none of these forces count. In university affairs, Senator Long is the alpha and omega of of-

(Continued on Second Page)

Something New

The first volume from the Louisiana State University Press, (whatever that is) is a bulky paper-bound bulletin by Harriet Spiller Daggett, teacher of civil law, bearing the title: "Compilation of Louisiana Statutes Affecting Child Labor and the Report of the Louisiana Children's Code Commission." The publication, which contains 150 pages, and evidently cost considerable money to produce, does not bear the union label. Page Senator Long!

LONG'S CONTROL MENACE TO L.S.U.

(Continued from First Page)

ficial action. President James Monroe Smith says no to that, but he acts yes.

From the smallest dormitory attendant to the chief administrator, Senator Long's selections are alone final. And, if he don't like 'em, he fires 'em. Sometimes, it isn't necessary for an employe or faculty member slated for the ax to be himself culpable in order to incur displeasure. He may have relatives who won't line up politically, or his father may have some time or other said something which displeased the kingfish. His university record, his ability as an instructor, his conciontious performance of duty, his fidelity to the university interest count as little as air-bubbles against the weight of Mr. Long's disfavor.

To illustrate: The senator is said to have appeared recently at Baton Rouge in a state of high exhilaration and there commanded the presence of a former member of the board of supervisors of the university. When the ex-supervisor responded, it is said that he found Senator Long gracefully draped on the counterpane, with light artillery conveniently at hand. Quite forgetting that he had had the ex-supervisor supplanted with a stronger political favorite, the senator ordered him to at once have removed an administrative officer of the institution.

When he learned, to his intense astonishment, that he had actually had his visitor politically decapitated, Mr. Long is reported to have reached for the telephone and transmitted his instructions directly to President Smith. Those who heard the conversation talked about it, and it is said that the language employed by Senator Long on that occasion was not precisely parlor rhetoric. But, the administrative officer referred to has some political strength; Senator John H. Overton is a personal friend of his—and he wasn't cast out, merely demoted. Nevertheless, the thread holding him to the university is exceedingly light and his friends expect to hear it snap any day.

Just how long the Louisiana State university, once the pride and boast of patriotic Louisianians, will be able to stand the strain of machine control, cannot be conjectured. It is housed in ornate buildings, lavishly furnished and equipped, and its financial resources are practically exhausted. It is a pauper in a palace. While homes and small farms were being sold taxes in every quarter of the state, millions were thrown away on costly political monuments—such as the medical center, in New Orleans and the Long swimming pool (the largest and most magnificent on the American continent), at Baton Rouge.

Here are some of the evil effects which Longism has produced recently at the state university:

Not a single teacher of summer courses received any salary whatever for his or her work. One hundred per cent of the amount is still due.

Members of the L. S. U. faculty were called together last week and advised that the limit of what they could hope for up to February 1, 1931, would be half pay for their services.

Complaints of cafeteria fare under the new Long management took the form of a signed protest from members of the student body.

The university established a store from which members of the faculty were required to purchase supplies and pay for them, not out of the amount due them for salary, but out of the money they actually receive—one-half up to February 1, as stated.

The university operates a filling station, in charge of J. E. Adams, nephew of Mrs. James Monroe Smith, and faculty members owning cars must buy from it. The station was built with state money, $3,500 having actually been borrowed for that purpose through the state board of liquidation.

Mrs. Mary C. Herget, dean of women for 13 years, has been transferred to a minor position. Mrs. Herget is said to have relatives both in East Baton Rouge and Caddo who are reported to have been guilty of the fatal indiscretion of opposing Senator Long.

Miss Harriet Spitler Dagnett has replaced Former Dean R. L. Tullis as a teacher of civil law. Behind this change many profess to see the prospective graduation in law of Kemble K. Kennedy, of "Whangdoodle" fame and protege of Senator Long.

Scholarships and fellowships have increased so extravagantly that it is said some fortunate individuals are favored with two or more of these appointments.

Although matriculation and other fees were doubled this year, the amount of cash received from the parents or guardians of students is said to be considerably below that taken in last year. During matriculation week, promissory notes are declared to have been the rule rather than the exception.

Up to quite recently, the Louisiana State university was a glutton for publicity. No improvement could be made, no faculty change recorded, without the public being made aware of it. But times have changed. President Smith is said to have recently instructed his faculty members to "soft pedal" talk about fine university buildings and equipment. Important faculty changes and additions were ordered without the public being taken into the institution's confidence. The university had a regularly established publicity department, but it suddenly ceased to function.

So, quite a number interested in university development do not know that Mrs. Marcus Wilkerson, whose husband is a teacher in the school of journalism, is acting dean of women, and that Mildred Cobb, of Monroe, has been added to the staff as assistant. There is also an academic dean of women, Mrs. Ophelia Stone Stone, who is assisted by Miss Culpepper.

Prof. H. W. Stopher, register of music and directly in charge of the department of music and art, is getting ready for several elaborate operatic productions this summer. Mrs. Frances Strickland is said to have been made hostess of this department. It is here that ostentation finds its fullest realization at the university. The building is one of the most beautiful of its kind in the world and the furnishings and equipment are said to be equalled by nothing on the American continent. Report has it that Dalton Reymond, who studied for the role in Europe, has been made costumer and publicity man and that A. M. Culpepper has been added to the publicity staff.

The sum of $20,000 said to have been expended last year in bringing able speakers to Baton Rouge is reported to have borne fruit. The graduate school has been greatly augmented through this means. It is in charge of Prof. Charles W. Pipkin.

Discharge of L. R. Burton, for many years in charge of the university cafeteria, is said to have had painful results. University students are none too keen for institution cafeterias under the best of circumstances; and although in charge but a few weeks, the new L. S. U. cafeteria management has felt the weight of strong resentment from cadets, day students and co-eds. James E. Nixon, Henry M. Duhe, Sterling W. Cappell, J. Toney Prescott, J. C. Cappell, Lawrence De Lisa, Harmon E. Minor, George Wright, Miller Marp and John E. Wells, Jr., all university students, recently signed a detailed complaint against cafeteria conditions in which they said that while the meals served there might be nourishing, they are certainly not wholesome or well-balanced.

The signers reminded the university heads that the naval air station at Pensacola provides three hundred men with three wholesome, appetizing and well-balanced meals per day at a cost of twenty-six cents per capita, whereas the university does not approach that for 360 students whom it charges 55 cents each per day.

The protest concludes: "This brief observation of the prevailing conditions existing in the upstairs dining hall leaves but one of two ultimate, convincing conclusions. Precisely speaking, the dining hall is either under incorrigible, debased management, or some one is deriving considerable financial benefit from the said dining hall."

This dining hall, recently constructed, is known as the Venitian room, and is in charge of a personal friend of Mrs. James Monroe Smith. When charged, just before his dismissal, with running behind in receipts, Mr. Burton pointed to the Venetian room as one of the causes. There was, he said, too much free service to the presidential menage. However, the supervisor of the Venetian room is said to be "aces up" with the university head. The store, about which so many members of the faculty privately complain, is in her charge.

Everyone who knows anything about the state university is aware of the splendor of its student band. This musical organization is the pride and glory of Senator Long who, on many football and athletic fields, has goose-stepped before it like a German hussar on Bismarck's birthday. The senator finds there is no surer and more picturesque way of filching the limelight than leading the band.

The band has a regular drum major—a tall, fine-looking chap who knows how to make a drum major's baton stand on its head and talk sanscrit. He is quite an attraction when Huey isn't edging him off the stage. Two weeks ago, when L. S. U. played Rice, startled patrons of the game beheld a new band attraction in the form of four (count 'em!) additional drum majors—two boys and two girls, in gorgeous new white uniforms. It looked like a knockout; but, a week later, when the L. S. U. eleven again performed in the university bowl, the four richly-apparaled drum majors were missing. And it is said that they have permanently vanished from the pages of L. S. U. football history.

Not having been consulted about the matter, it is said that Senator Long didn't like 'em. He thought that they detracted from the musical tout ensemble. So, he would have no more of them. It is reported that his order that they not again be permitted to spoil the landscape was quickly obeyed. And it is reported also, that the dethroned drum majors had been promised scholarships as a reward for their work. Query; did they get them?

Mention was made some time ago of the university riding school, which also fell into senatorial disfavor because Senator Long does not ride. It is said that Mr. Long sent a peremptory order to President Smith to "sell those plugs." So, they are being disposed of. The senator's influence is compelling in all things, great and small.

And so, politically guided and politically administered, the state university moves on to a precarious destiny. It swallowed more millions last year than during any previous ten years of its history. Only once was the year's record approached, but not equalled—when the new university was being built with severance tax money.

The university is in a bad way. Only a new senator, a new governor, a new president and a new board of supervisors can save it.